

MARRIAGE... AFTER DEATH

TEN MINUTE PLAY

By **Abbey Ferrier and Roy C. Booth**

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SYNOPSIS: Vincent is dead. Quite dead, actually, and he's okay with that. Really. What he is not okay with is the fact that they have buried him between his first wife, who died 25 years ago, and his current wife, who died with him in the car accident. Spending eternity in the ground with one of them would have been all right, but with both? With the two of them comparing notes? Fighting over him? Possibly even ganging up on him? Why, that's enough to actually welcome a zombie apocalypse!

CAST OF CHARACTERS
(1 MAN, 2 WOMEN)

VINCENT (m)A corpse, 50.
LENORE (f)..... Vincent's first wife, also a corpse, 25.
JEZEBEL (f)..... Vincent's later wife, also a corpse, 48.

SETTING

The local cemetery, last Thursday, in a zombie-infested parallel universe.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

Marriage...After Death was first performed at The Cabin in Bemidji, MN on November 2, 2009. The original cast and crew were as follows:

LENORECynthia Booth
VINCENT Andor Lofthus
JEZEBELErica Johnson

Director Roy C. Booth
Stage Manager..... Howard Preston
Set Designer Roy C. Booth
Lights and Sound..... Jake Baggenstoss
House ManagerNeomi Ayelsworth

AT RISE:

Standing center stage are three pine boxes tipped vertically on end. The boxes are open, and the interiors are lined with black velvet. On top of each box, there is a mound of dirt and grass with a headstone poking from it. The headstones read, from left to right, "Lenore, Beloved Wife," "Vincent, Loving Husband," and "Jezebel, Devoted Wife." LENORE, a young woman with long hair, is very white and decomposed. She is wearing a long, tattered black dress and black makeup, one eye closed and blackened to simulate it being missing. She lies dead in the left box. VINCENT, a man, 50, still has his color to him, a fresh corpse. He is wearing a black suit and lies dead in the center box. JEZEBEL, a middle-aged woman whose hair has been styled, is also fresh-looking. Wearing a knee-length black pencil skirt and black blouse, she lies dead in the right box.

From offstage, the sounds of grief can be heard. Over the crying and wailing, a priest can be heard giving a final prayer. Once he has finished, each of the boxes are lit up under a blue light. There is a moment of silence and the deceased can be seen lying in their coffins.

LENORE: (*Opening her eyes.*) What is this, then? Hmmm? Who's there? Hello? (*She gets no response. She bangs on the side of her box, trying to get someone's attention.*) I'll have you know this is a private plot! A private plot! Hello?

VINCENT: (*Opening his eyes, looks around his box.*) Lenore?

LENORE: Yes...

VINCENT: Lenore! Lenore, it's me! It's Vincent!

LENORE: Vincent? Oh, my dear, sweet Vincent! I always knew you would come back to me. I knew it! Mother always said you were no good, but I knew she was wrong, I knew you meant it when you said you would be with me always!

VINCENT: Sweet little Lenore. It's been so long, my darling, a long, lonely 25 years. Oh, how I wish I could stare into those big beautiful eyes of yours once again. Lose myself in them...for all eternity.

LENORE: (*Batting her eyelashes and giggling sweetly.*) Oh, those.

The worms started on those long ago, my love.

JEZEBEL: (*Opening her eyes and turning her head sharply towards VINCENT.*) Oi! Who are you talking to, Vincent?

VINCENT: (*Turns his attention to his right side, then looks back to the left, realizing he is buried between his wives.*) Uh...no one, pumpkin. Heh. I was just commenting to myself about...uhh...about...worms.

JEZEBEL: Worms?

VINCENT: Yes, dear. Worms. Heh. How long do you think before the worms have at us?

JEZEBEL: (*Her mouth drops in disgust.*) Vincent!

LENORE: Vincent?

VINCENT: (*Nervous laugh.*) Yes...dears?

LENORE: Darling? What is going on? Darling?

VINCENT: Uhhh...

LENORE: Who is that buried next to you?

VINCENT: Um, well, Lenore, you passed away such a long time ago...and...umm...

JEZEBEL: I'm his wife! That's who I am! Who in the blazes are you?

LENORE: (*Taken aback.*) I'm his wife! Tell her, Vincent! Tell her that I'm your wife!

VINCENT: Well, technically...

LENORE AND JEZEBEL: Yes?

VINCENT: You're *both* my wives.

LENORE AND JEZEBEL: What?

VINCENT: Uh oh.

JEZEBEL: Vincent?

VINCENT: Yes, dear?

JEZEBEL: I am getting a little annoyed. I am counting to 10. My therapist said to count to 10 whenever I couldn't stand you, remember? One...two...three...

VINCENT: Your therapist was a quack.

JEZEBEL: (*Her lips purse tighter.*) Four...five...six...

VINCENT: All he wanted was my money. \$300 an hour. \$300 an hour to teach you to count. Ha!

JEZEBEL: (Now counting through a clenched jaw.)
Seven...eight...nine...ten. I am still annoyed! Had I not broken my arm in that inconveniently lethal car accident, I'd be beating you with it right now. Oh, yes, that would feel good, wouldn't it? (*She inhales sharply.*)

VINCENT: Oh, come now, dear, it's not that bad. No need to go into dramatics. Cripes, you are as bad as your Cousin Lou, groaning and wailing up there like he actually cared we were dead.

JEZEBEL: Leave Cousin Lou out of this, dear.

LENORE: Vincent? Did you...remarry? You...you promised me on my deathbed you wouldn't. You promised! On my deathbed!

VINCENT: Oh, Lenore, sweetheart, joy of my soul, love of my life, I was lonely without you. Terribly. I couldn't make it on my own...

JEZEBEL: I beg your pardon? I thought I was the love of your life.

VINCENT: Uh, well, you're the love of my life, *too*, pumpkin. You are both the loves of my life.

LENORE: That's ridiculous, Vincent. You can't have *two* loves of your life. They're not the love of your life if you have more than one of them!

JEZEBEL: She has a point, Vincent. And another thing, how come her headstone says "beloved wife" and mine only says "devoted"? Hmm? What am I, your lapdog?

VINCENT: What? No, pumpkin. I didn't have any say in what was put on your headstone! I was kind of dead at the time!

LENORE: Oh, Vincent, you were always good at making excuses.

JEZEBEL: Don't I know it! I wanted to stay home, spend some time putting new plastic on the furniture and cleaning up the house, but no, Vincent wasn't feeling well, he needed some air, just had to go drive on down to the beach. Zip, zip, zip! **HA!** Let's see you get some air now, Vince! If it wasn't for you and your zip, zip, zip, we wouldn't be in this mess! The car wouldn't be an accordion and my children wouldn't be orphans!

LENORE: Vincent? You left orphans?

JEZEBEL: He sure did. Three of them!

LENORE: Vincent, you told me you didn't want children. Ever.

VINCENT: No, no, no, it's not that I didn't want children at all.

LENORE: Really?

VINCENT: I just didn't want any with you.

LENORE: What! *(Cries.)* Wahhhhhh!!!!

VINCENT: No, I mean, I didn't want any with you at the time. I...I...I just wasn't ready to be a father. We were so young. Maybe if you had lived a few more years, we could have thought about starting a family.

LENORE: *(She turns away from VINCENT.)* Perhaps if you didn't make me go on that ski trip with you, I wouldn't have caught pneumonia and died. This is entirely your fault.

VINCENT: Lenore, darling, be reasonable. The doctors did everything they could. You know that.

LENORE: I...I just can't speak to you right now. *(She yells across to JEZEBEL.)* Excuse me, lady...

JEZEBEL: My name is Jezebel.

LENORE: Nice to meet you, Jezebel. I'm Lenore.

JEZEBEL: It's a pleasure, Lenore, I'm sure.

LENORE: Likewise. Jezebel, would you please tell that man buried next to me that I'm not speaking to him.

JEZEBEL: *(She knocks on the left side of her box, getting VINCENT's attention.)* Hey, Vince! Your long lost love says she isn't speaking to you.

VINCENT: *(A bit testy.)* Yes, dear. Thank you, I heard her.

JEZEBEL: Well, don't get grumpy with me, Mr. Zip, Zip, Zip! She's your wife.

VINCENT: She's not my wife! Well, she is my wife, but you're my wife...now. She's my first wife, you're my second wife. *(He lets out an exasperated sigh.)* Can't we just call this whole thing off, you know, 'til death do us part and all? Lenore?

LENORE: I am not speaking to you. *(Yelling across to JEZEBEL.)* I'm not speaking to him!

JEZEBEL: She's not speaking to you.

VINCENT: I told the kids I wanted to be cremated. Have my ashes scattered out to sea... *(There is a brief silence. VINCENT has his head in his hands, LENORE is idly running her fingers through her hair, and JEZEBEL has her lips pursed and her arms folded in annoyance.)*

LENORE: Is she pretty?

VINCENT: Huh?

LENORE: Your wife. Next door. Is she pretty?

VINCENT: Well...yeah. Of course she's pretty... (*He looks to his right then lowers his voice.*) Not as pretty as you, of course, Lenore.

LENORE: (*Giggles.*) Hee!

JEZEBEL: I heard that.

VINCENT: (*To JEZEBEL, in hushed tones.*) I only said that to keep her quiet. You know you're the most beautiful girl in the world, pumpkin.

JEZEBEL: Aww, Vince, even after all these years, you're still a charmer.

VINCENT looks from side to side at his wives, rolls his eyes and lets out a sigh.

JEZEBEL: Vince, before I lie next to you rotting for all eternity, I need to know one thing.

VINCENT: Yes, dear?

JEZEBEL: Anything?

VINCENT: Anything.

JEZEBEL: Who do you love the most?

LENORE: Yes! Who?

VINCENT: What? No, I can't choose!

JEZEBEL: Pick one!

VINCENT: Nooo! I'm not going to pick a favorite wife. That's absurd. It's like comparing apples to oranges, cats to dogs, blue chip stocks to—

LENORE: Let's say there was a great, big, terrible house fire and we were both trapped inside and you only had time to save one of us. Who would you rescue?

VINCENT: Well, that's a stupid question, because it doesn't matter. We are already dead. I could just walk in, light a cigar and toast a few marshmallows for all it matters!

JEZEBEL: I can't wait until my mother dies. You'll be sorry then!

VINCENT: I have had it with you two! I don't want to spend my whole eternity listening to you two bicker! It doesn't matter. I love you both. (*Both women turn away, folding their arms in a huff.*)

VINCENT: You know what? Fine! If that's the way you want to be, fine! *(He starts to rattle and shake his box.)*

JEZEBEL: What on earth are you doing now, Vince?

LENORE: Vincent?

VINCENT: I'm getting out! That's what I'm doing!

LENORE: Vincent, you can't!

VINCENT: Oh, and why not?

JEZEBEL: You have nowhere to go, that's why, silly.

VINCENT: I am going to take my chances as the living dead!

LENORE AND JEZEBEL: Oh, Vincent! *(He bursts out of his box and begins to shuffle around a bit.)*

VINCENT: Braaaaaainsss...

LENORE: Ewww...

JEZEBEL: Gross.

VINCENT: *(Laughing.)* I've always wanted to say that. *(He shuffles behind the boxes and begins to climb his way out.)*

JEZEBEL: Fine. Just walk out on us like that, then.

LENORE: That's right! We don't need you! We have each other!

JEZEBEL: That's right! Vincent? Vincent?

VINCENT: *(He pops up over his grave, looks around.)*
Braaaaaaaainsss... *(He shuffles off stage.)*

LENORE: *(Pause.)* Ugh. Men can be so, so childish.

JEZEBEL: You said it, Lenore. Why can't they just be more like us?

LENORE: Exactly. *(Pause.)* Well, he can't get away with this!

JEZEBEL: Oh, no, no, he can't!

LENORE: Shall we, then?

JEZEBEL: Yes, let's! *(Both rise up from their respective graves, taking a stance similar to VINCENT's. They pause to look at one another.)*

LENORE AND JEZEBEL: Braaaaaaaainsss... *(They shuffle offstage.)*

BLACKOUT.

THE END